

**UPDATE ON OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY WORKFORCE STUDY**

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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY WORKFORCE STUDY  
CONDUCTED BY THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

Page numbers refer to the PDF page number. Comments are underlined.

Page 1-2      “In 2019, occupational employment data estimates that there are approximately 2,600 OTAs employed in California. In 2019, occupational employment data estimates that there are approximately 2,600 OTAs employed in California.<sup>2</sup> Over the same period, according to state licensure data, an estimated 3,500 individuals held an active OTA license in the state.<sup>3</sup> This could mean that approximately 900 OTAs are licensed but were not employed as OTAs in California in 2019.

<sup>1</sup>Emsi data. What is Emsi?

Re: Estimate of 900 OTAs licensed but not employed. This was a period of significant Medicare change which anecdotally changed the employment landscape (more groups, more PRN vs full-time employees, etc. It would be beneficial to understand the factors that render 900 OTAs licensed but not employed.

Page 5      “While most OTAs (61%) reported being employed in one position, it is common to hold multiple OTA positions (39%), see Exhibit 6. This practice makes up for insufficient hours, helps to build savings, and makes up for low wages, according to the findings of this study.”

It is not uncommon the have an OTA working in the public school system, their preferred setting, with a reduced schedule due to holidays, summer break, etc., and at a pay rate lower than that offered in contract rehabilitation. Some choose to work per diem in skilled nursing to increase their annual salary.

Page 7      Should Exhibit 7 be titled “Underemployment” based on recent Medicare changes and workplace setting? It would valuable to know the impact of Medicare changes to determine how it has changed, if at all, the employment landscape.

Page 14      “According to occupational projection data, there is an estimated need of as many as 500 OTAs per year through 2024.” What is the source of this data?

Comparing data sources to assess validity can be a challenge due to the ranges of reporting periods.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	
Report		500 OTA Openings Annually											
EDD	300 OTA Openings Annually												
BLS		450 OTA Openings Annually											
CCCCO	Retrospective Data Only												

Page 18 “The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) pulls from a statewide data system known as LaunchBoard...” The provides retrospective data related to enrollment, completion, etc.

Page 19 “Based on survey responses, 59% of OTAs definitely or probably would support this new requirement, while 21% would definitely or probably not support it.” It is important to understand that an entry-level bachelor’s will likely not result in a pay increase, per industry feedback during exploration inquiries.

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The program director has been attending the “Healthcare Apprenticeship Learning Series” provided by the California Health Workforce Initiative. In addition, she has met with Adele Burns, Regional Director of Apprenticeships. The focus of that meeting was to address the barriers of meeting the academic standards of the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education in a non-traditional educational format.

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Page 64 “During the 2019-20 program year, three OTA programs reported 52 clinical placements at 31 sites across the state.”

It is unclear if this data reflects a partial report or is draft text in that the SCC program has not yet reported data, partly due to the disruptions caused by the onset of COVID-19. In addition, with the launch of this initiative, there has been some confusion about distinguishing between OT Aides and OT Assistants. These distinct categories were to report separately, should there be any OT Aide programs operating.

This report includes only public institutions and does not include data from private institutions and the impact these may have on fieldwork placements.